The underground newspapers which functioned throughout the 1960's were mostly cause-oriented and when those causes ended (like the War, the Draft), so did the papers. Those that survive to the present are strange hybrid beasts, financed by the very kind of advertising they would once have rejected. These small weeklies are called sex papers or entertainment papers (hype sheets). Some exist in an in-between world, half-politics, half-sex, with a lot of other things sandwiched in. It was in the small papers like the Berkeley BARB, Los Angeles FREE PRESS, and EAST VILLAGE OTHER that underground COMIX began, and collectors are now starting to search for such rare items as GOTHIC BLIMPWORKS and ZODIAC MINDWARP. After all, a collection of the work of Greg Irons is not complete without his Berkeley TRIBE covers and the Vince Shazam material originally published in the short-lived San Francisco ORGAN. If you are collecting the art of Trina, you'll be looking for the 15 issues of the women's paper, IT AIN'T ME BABE, produced by the collective of the same name in 1969-70. Maybe you just got into the ugs and you don't even know about John Bryan's THE SUNDAY PAPER, precursor of the current S. F. PHOENIX, which featured four-pages of full-color ug funnies. It ran 7 issues, before John ran out of money. The comic sections are still available from him. Write to PHOENIX, 79 Beaver St. San Francisco, Ca. Fans of Dave Geiser and Willy Murphy will be glad to hear that both the artists are doing regular strips for PHOENIX. There have only been a few books on the underground press so far and most of them by people who were not part of the trip; i.e., grad students doing theses. I'm thinking of Glessing's THE UNDERGROUND PRESS IN AMERICA, and Lawrence Leamer's THE PAPER REVOLUTIONARIES. No doubt more scholarship will be done on this period in the next few years, but it is not going to be easy. Few libraries kept any of this material. Most of them did not even subscribe to make it available to their readers. Those scholars who decide to hunt down the papers are going to find a lot of frustration ahead of them. The papers are gone and the people who produced them have dispersed. A whole decade of unique and innovative American literature lost because it went against propriety and the journalistic mainstream. The funnies fared better than the rest of the papers, because the cartoonists kept their originals and reprinted most of them at a later time in comic book format. Nearly all of the known ug cartoonists today published their early work in the BLIMPS or YELLOW DOGS. . . . So what's happening? Well, there may be a renaissance of tabloid comic art coming up. The Berkeley BARB is running more panels and strips these days, and ROLLING STONE for March 14, 1974, has a strip by Rand Holmes. ZENGER, the San Francisco State College paper, did an interview and cover spread on Ted Richards in February. I ran into Ted when he was getting stats of the new material at Rip-Off Press. The new work is called EZEKIEL WOLF, and it's to be a long, graphic novel. We talked about the Straight Arrow History of UGS (COMIX WORLD 6) and Ted said, "It's funny all these anthologies coming out. The best of the underground artists. They're writin' guys off who aren't even 30 yet." Ted's right. What it is is an extension of the New York attitude that the ugs were a sixties fad which died out. It's a logical idea when you consider the competitive aspect. Marvel wants everybody reading SPIDER-MAN, not DOPIN' DAN, and if any ug artist gets any action on the East Coast it's likely to be because he's being promoted by Eastern companies that want to sign him up. Information on the East Coast is limited to the straight comics, and one of the main reasons COMIX WORLD was started was to get out the info on the ugs to those who couldn't get it elsewhere. When COMIXSCENE first started, I sent a proposal for an underground column to the editor. I not only didn't get a reply, but my material was ripped off. An article on horror promoted Richard Corben and ignored Greg Irons, Jaxon, Charles Dallas, Spain, Rory Hayes, as well as trips like SKULL, REAL PULP, TALES OF SEX AND DEATH, INSECT FEAR, and the whole underground EC revival trip. COMIXSCENE (now MEDIASCENE) is Jim Steranko's personal hype-sheet, and while Undergrounds are listed on his masthead, the past three issues have had no information on them. THE COMIC READER is in the

same category. Detailed descriptions of the latest banalities of the HulK and The Thing are given, while a single page is alloted to the ugs. When Menomenee Falls took over the READER, I wrote to Jerry Sinkovec to offer him up-to-date coverage on the ugs, and like the rest of the East Coast trippers, he didn't have the courtesy to answer me. It's pretty clear that the artists and writers on the West Coast are going to have to develop their own media scene. Those who get their news from the East are likely to feel that nothing is happening in the undergrounds when the truth is they are just beginning. The second Annual Berkeley Underground Con is coming up on April 17-20 at Pauley Ballroom on the UC campus. It's $5.50 in advance. Tables go for $25 (3 x 6'). Ads are $25 for a full page, $15 for a half page and copy is due by March 15. Guests include all of the major underground artists and a number of overgrounders as well. Films include "Juliet of the Spirits," "Dumbo," and "The Seventh Seal." There will be workshops and drawing sessions and discussions as well as an original art show. Over 4,000 people showed up last April (and, in case you're a VIVA reader, Shel Dorf had nothing to do with the Berkeley Con, which, naturally, was not held in San Francisco--Shel does the San Diego Con. VIVA's editor oughta know that.). Send your bread to BERKELEY CON/SUPERB/ UC Student Union/Berkeley, Ca 94720. Call 'em at 415-933-3667. Even Mel Blanc is coming! . . . Watch for MEEF 2 this week (March 1).. . . Jay Lynch's NARD N' PAT is out. Jay tells me he finished it January 25th. That's for you historians. . . . 39¢ to Chick Productions, Box 662, Chino, Ca. 91710 gets you CRUSADER COMICS #1 by Jack T. Chick. . . . Comics and Comix, 2512 Telegraph in Berkeley will publish four books this April: John Pound's RONALD THE BARBARIAN Jack Katz' THE FIRST KINGDOM, Pinkoski's SPACED, and Tom Bird's BARBARIAN KILLER FUNNIES. . . Trina has a story in THE LEAN YEARS. Her GIRL FIGHT 2 will be published by The Print Mint in April. She's been teaching a comix class in junior high and has said she'll lecture on "The Image of Women in the Comix" for the Comics Conference I'm coordinating for UC Extension (55 Laguna, S. F.) July 26-28. Tuition will be about $50 and you'll get two units of credit in ENGLISH!! COMIX WORLD will have a table at the Berkeley Con. Stop by. If you haven't already SUBSCRIBE. $2.50 year. Check to Clay Geerdes/915 Indian Rock Rd. Berkeley, Ca 94707. For complete set of back issues, send an extra dollar to cover costs and mailing. You need some specific info, write and ask. *******